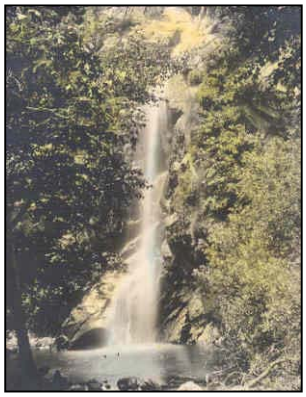
MUIR LODGE
1913 1938

One of the first projects of the new Southern California Section of the Sierra Club was the construction of a mountain lodge in Big Santa Anita Canyon above Sierra Madre. It was named after John Muir, and although Muir did not live to see the lodge, he did contribute $50 towards its construction. For 25 years this "mountain home of the Sierra Club" was a center of chapter activities, ranging from hikes to parties of various sorts. Eventually a women's screened-in sleeping area was erected just upstream of the main building, and a corresponding men's annex sprouted up on the downstream side. A roofed out-door kitchen area extended onto the rear porch.



As these photographs show, life was blissful at Muir Lodge. You could take a five-minute stroll upstream to beautiful Sturtevant Falls (pictured at the left). Or sit on a rocking chair in the clearing before the entrance and listen to the gently babbling brook. Unfortunately, this normally peaceful stream went on a rampage in March of 1938, and the same storm that destroyed many resorts in the local mountains also ravaged Muir Lodge. By this time the club's larger Harwood Lodge facility co-opted the desire to reconstruct Muir Lodge and the site was abandoned. What survives today? Not a trace of the building, nor even any photographs of the women's sleeping area or the rear porch and kitchen. However, the sequoia tree shown being planted at the dedication ceremony is still there, now grown to over 50 feet.

This CD preserves many of the photographs of Muir Lodge, in both high resolution and medium resolution formats. This document file identifies and describes each image. You can use your internet browser or any photo editing application to open and view the high resolution images. Enjoy.

Bob Cates
Chair, Angeles Chapter History Committee

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Photo description: Hand-colored photograph of Sturtevant Falls, just a five-minute walk upstream from Muir Lodge

Back labeled “Sturdevant (sic) Falls, Big Santa Anita Canyon, Los Angeles County”

Contributor/Photographer: William C. Barry

Credit: William C. Barry Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Barry 001

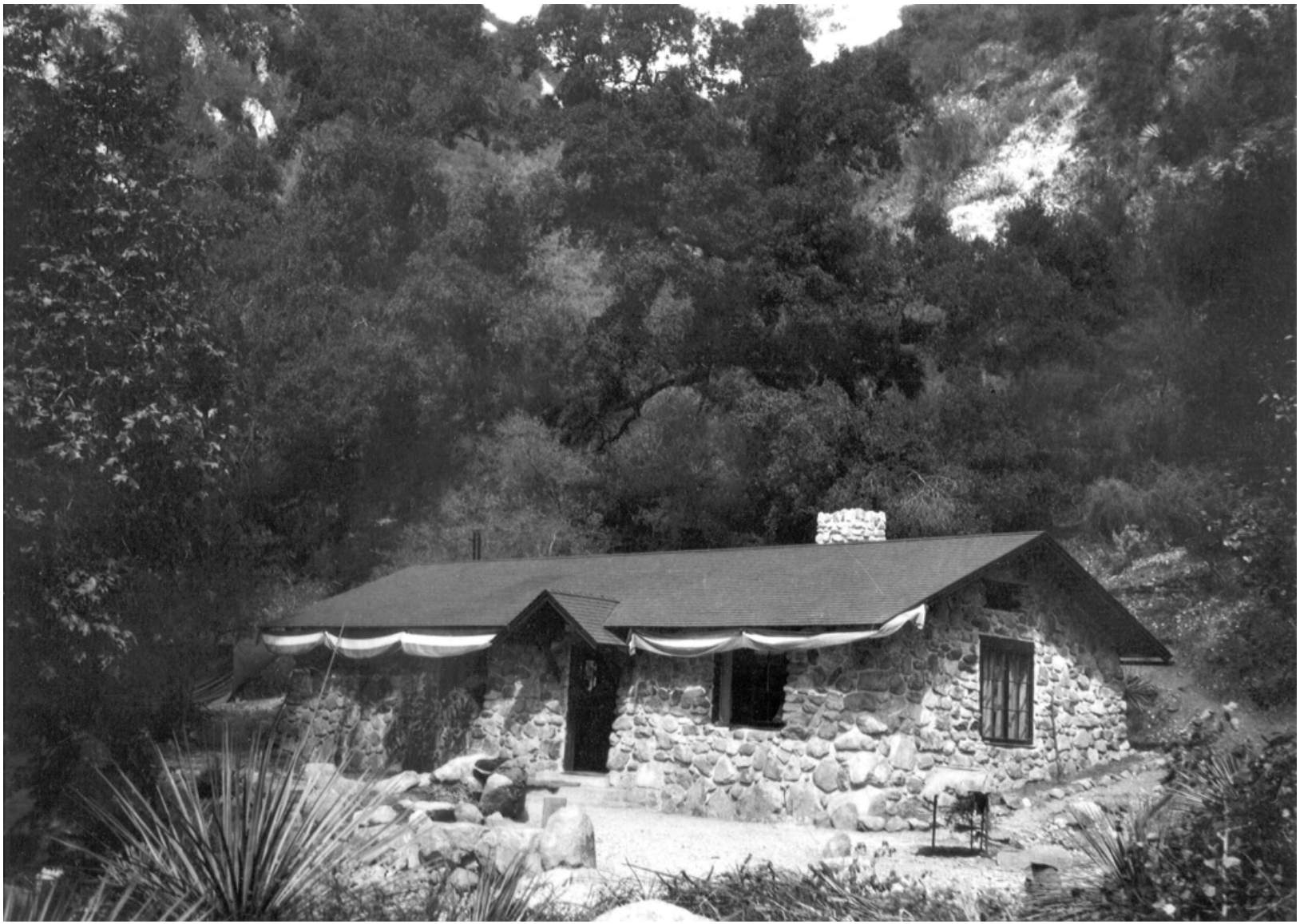


Photo description: Muir Lodge decked out in bunting for dedication ceremonies on October 5, 1913. Note sapling sequoia tree planted near corner of building. This tree is all that remains of Muir Lodge today.

Back labeled “Muir Lodge Dedication, 10/5—1913” and stamped “H.E. Bailey”

Contributor: Hyram E. Bailey

Credit: Hyram E. Bailey Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Bailey 001

Photo description: Chapter founder Phil Bernays proudly cements in a corner boundary on the Muir Lodge property just leased from the U.S. Forest Service. Kneeling far right is Charles Fox, a charter member of the chapter who chaired the chapter for eight of its first fifteen years. Autumn, 1912.

Photographer: Unknown Contributor: Phil Bernays

Credit: Phil Bernays Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Bernays 001

Description: Dedication of site for Muir Lodge; Autumn 1912. The man holding the trowel at the cairn is Charles Fox. Phil Bernays is standing holding hat second from right.

Back of original labeled “Planting the corner stake, Muir Lodge”

Photographer: Unknown Contributor: Phil Bernays

Credit: Phil Bernays Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Bernays 002

Description: A pack train near Sturtevants Camp, June 1, 1913. All supplies and building materials for Muir Lodge were packed in from Chantry Flat. This appears to be a group of Sierrans on their way to provision the volunteer workers who were constructing Muir Lodge at this time.

Back labeled “Pack train near Sturdevants Camp, 6/1—1913.” Back also stamped “H.E. Bailey”.

Photographer: Hyram “Hi” Bailey. Contributor assumed Hyram E. Bailey.

Credit: Hyram E. Bailey Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Bailey 002

Description: Photographer and exact location unknown, but likely to be pack train hauling building materials for construction of Muir Lodge during summer of 1913.

Contributor: Unknown

Credit: Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Anonymous 001

Description: Six unidentified men shown clearing the site of Muir Lodge

Back labeled “Working at Site of Muir Lodge, Santa Anita Canyon. 1/12—1913.” Back also stamped “H.E. Bailey”.

Photographer: Hyram “Hi” Bailey. Hyram E. Bailey

Credit: Hyram.E. Bailey Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Bailey 003

Description: Muir Lodge under construction. The man pushing the wheelbarrow is Phil Bernays. Standing next to him in dark clothing is Chester Versteeg.

Photographer: Unknown (possibly Charles Fox) Contributor: Phil Bernays

Credit: Phil Bernays Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D.: Bernays 003

Description: Chester Versteeg (with saw) working on Muir Lodge, Fall 1912. Versteeg was said to have literally worked 40 days and 40 nights on the construction of Muir Lodge.

Photographer: Unknown Contributor: Phil Bernays

Credit: Phil Bernays Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D.: Bernays 004

Description: Group of construction workers having lunch. Phil Bernays presides at the head of the table. Sitting on near side, left to right, are Charles Fox (mustache), Chester Versteeg (close-cropped hair), unidentified woman. Sitting on far side, left to right, are Lester Moore (Muir Lodge architect, wearing tie), a man identified as Moore's brother-in-law, Ralph Bernays (Phil's younger brother), and an unidentified hired carpenter.

Photographer: E.B. Gray Contributor: Phil Bernays

Credit: Photo by E.B. Gray, Phil Bernays Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D.: Bernays 005

Description: Muir Lodge Dedication, October 4, 1913. Judge Claire Tappaan presiding (large man on right, wearing tie and holding large stick). Sequoia tree sapling has been planted in foreground as part of the ceremony. This tree is still growing on the site.

Photographer: William C. Barry (deduced from handwriting on back) Contributor: William C. Barry

Credit: William C. Barry Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Barry 002

Same photograph as previous, but someone drew arrows identifying Professor [Everett] Shephardson and (with arrow coming in from the left, Kiddson L. Kidd (known as "Captain" Kidd).

Photographer: William C. Barry Contributor: William C. Barry

Credit: William C. Barry Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

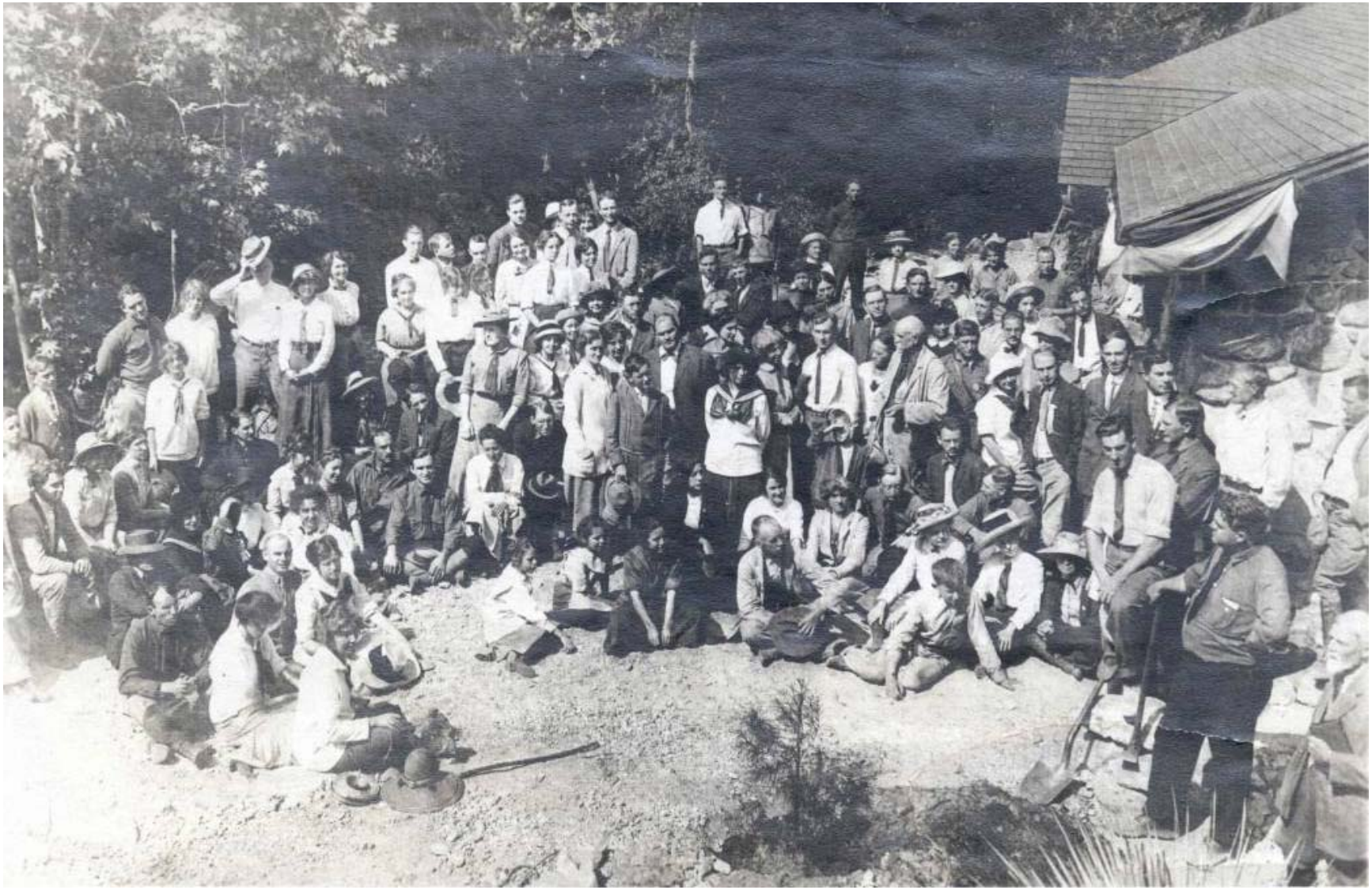
Photo I.D. (file name): Barry 002a

Description: Muir Lodge Dedication, October 4, 1913. Judge Claire Tapaan presiding (large man on right, wearing tie with hand resting on pick-axe handle). Chapter founder Phil Bernays' can be seen peering over the head of the man standing immediately to Tappaan's right.

Photographer: Unknown (possibly Charles Fox) Contributor: Charles Fox

Credit: Charles Fox Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Fox 001

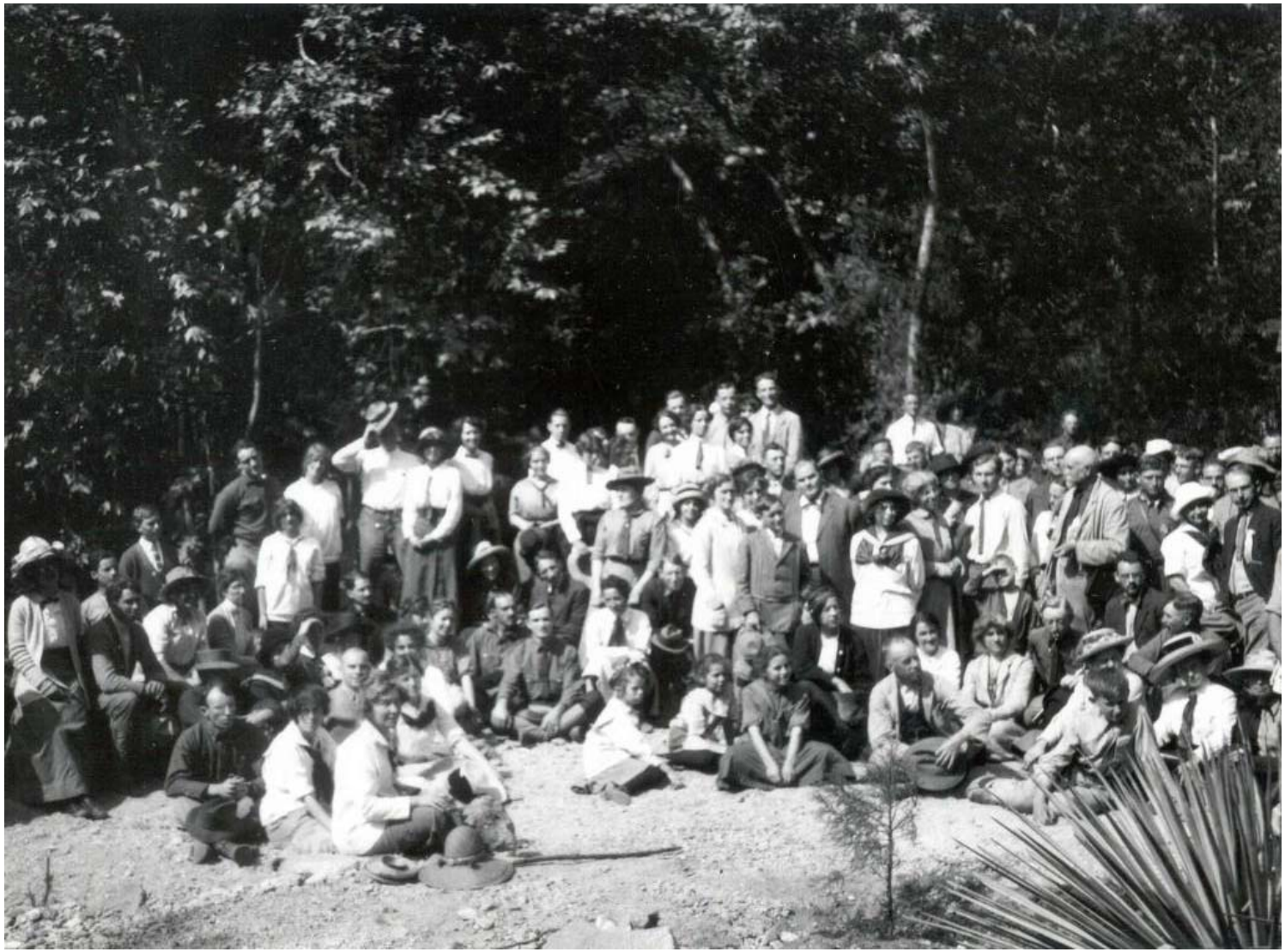


Description: Muir Lodge Dedication, October 4, 1913. A variant from previous photo. Judge Claire Tapaan presiding (large man on right, wearing tie with hand resting on pick-axe handle). Chapter founder Phil Bernays' can be seen standing about 10 feet to Tappaan's right, wearing ribbons on his coat. This is the best photo of the sequoia tree planted as part of the dedication.

Photographer: Unknown (possibly Charles Fox) Contributor: Charles Fox

Credit: Charles Fox Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Fox 002

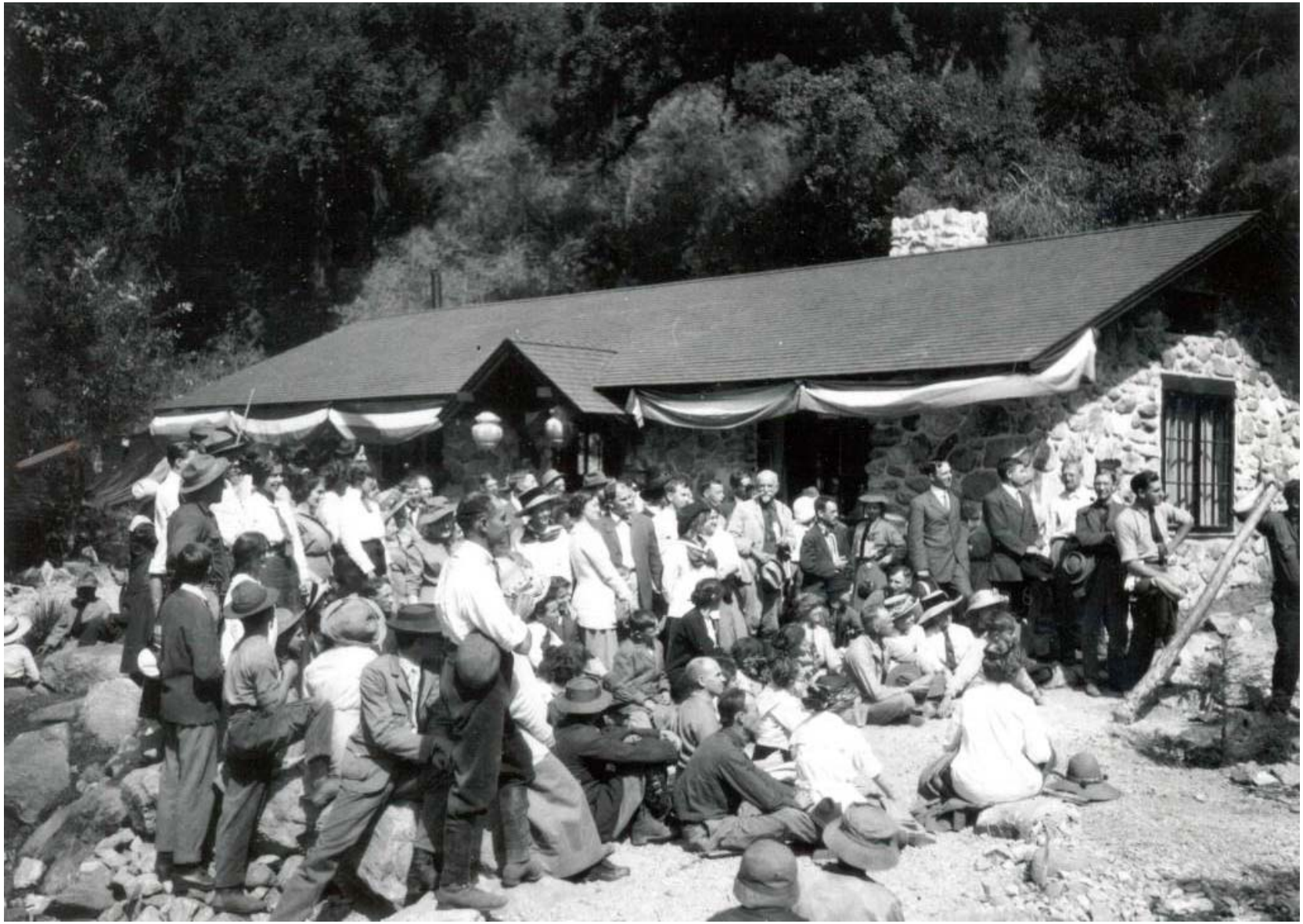


Description: Muir Lodge Dedication, October 4, 1913. View taken closer to ground level. Phil Bernays at far right. Sequoia sapling dedication tree in foreground.

Photographer/contributor: Hyram E. Bailey

Credit: Photo by Hyram E. Bailey, Hyram E. Bailey Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Bailey 004



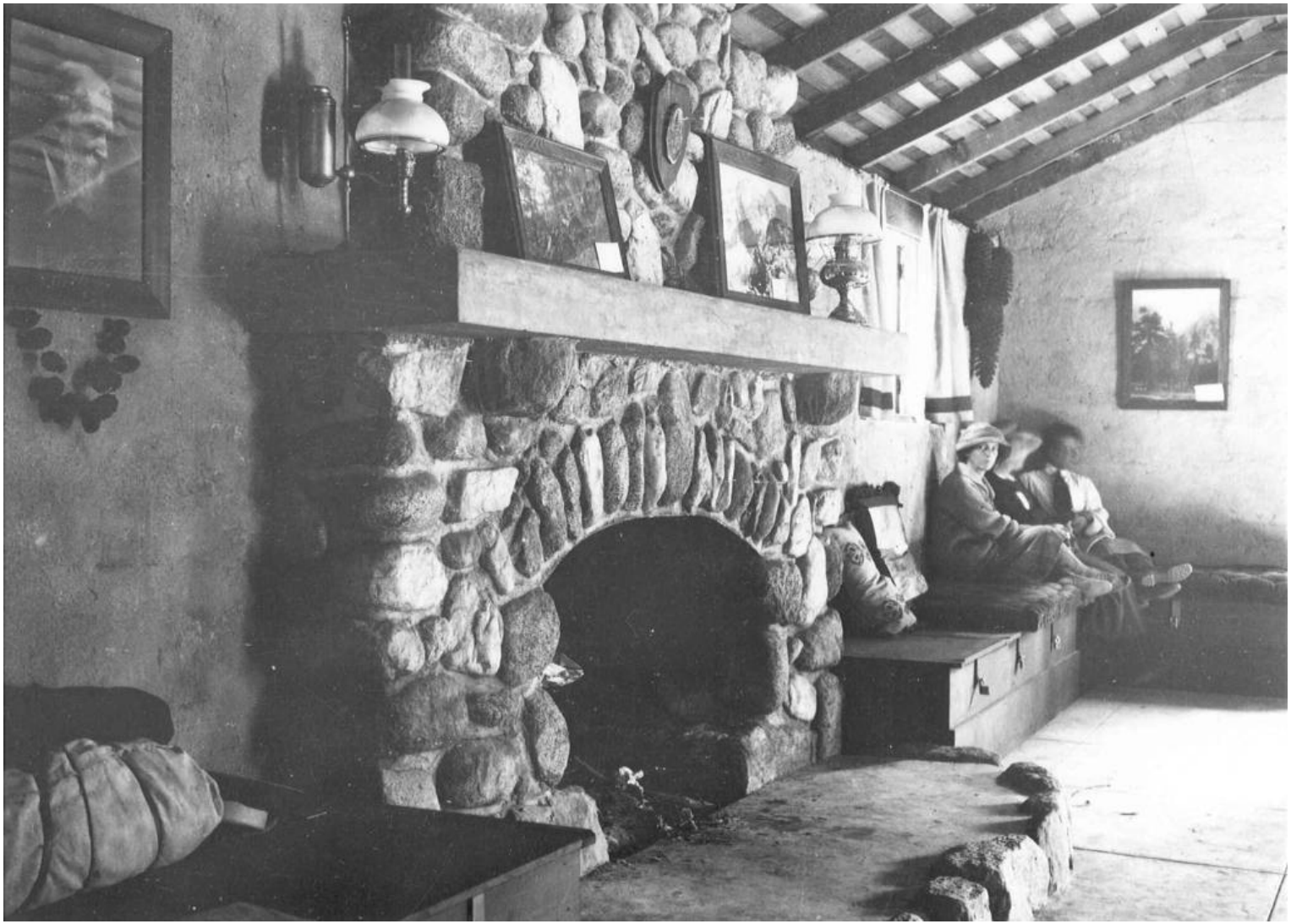
Description: Muir Lodge Dedication, October 4, 1913. View taken closer to ground level.
Photographer/contributor: Hyram E. Bailey
Credit: Hyram E. Bailey Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives
Photo I.D. (file name): Bailey 005

Description: Muir Lodge, interior view. The large photograph of Muir on the fireplace mantle and the bronze plaque hanging on the center of the chimney, along with the water-damaged guest registry, were the only items salvaged from Muir Lodge after the catastrophic flood in March of 1938. Muir Lodge was built in the Craftsman Style prevalent at the time, characterized by use and exposure of natural building materials, as typified by the boulders forming the fireplace and the exposed roof beams. Simple lines in architecture and furniture were also part of the Craftsman movement. Part of the lodge's operating funds were derived from the rental of lockers, one of which can be seen beneath the bench on the left.

Photographer: Unknown Contributor: Unknown

Credit: Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Anonymous 002



Description: Muir Lodge interior. Back of photo labeled “Fireplace Muir Lodge” and dated 6/5—1913. However, since the Lodge was under construction during the summer of 1913, with the dedication taking place in October of 1913, this clearly is the wrong date. The photo is probably from the late teens or early 1920s.

Photographer/contributor: Hyram E. Bailey

Credit: Hyram E. Bailey Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Bailey 006

Description: Muir Lodge interior. The most somber moment ever commemorated at Muir Lodge came as this group gathered on December 26, 1914, to hold a memorial service for John Muir, who had passed away 2 days before.

Photographer/contributor: Hyram E. Bailey

Credit: Photo by Hyram E. Bailey, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Bailey 007

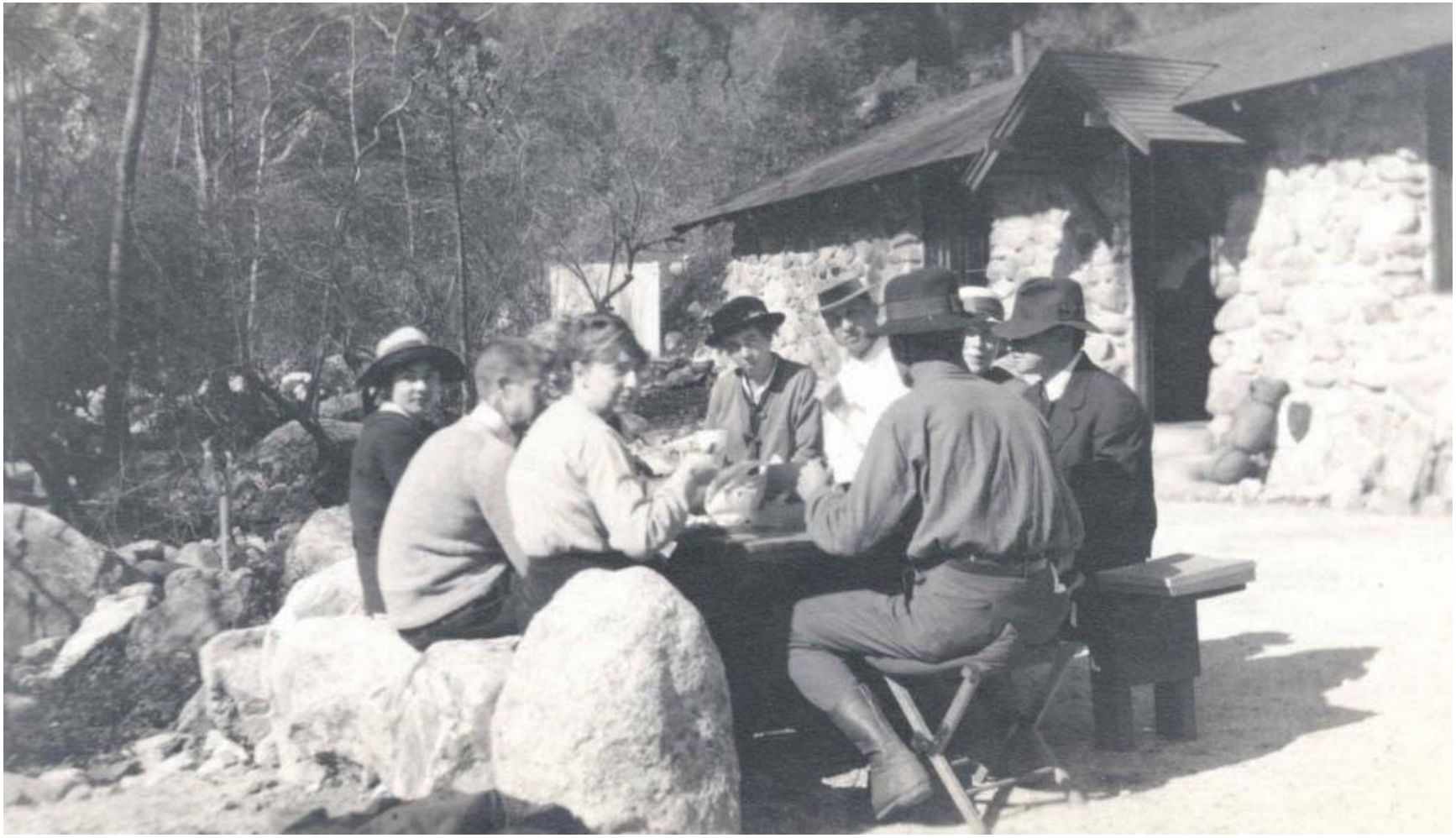
Description: Muir Lodge exterior view, undated, but from size of sequoia dedication tree, it's circa 1914.
Photographer/Contributor: William C. Barry
Credit: William C. Barry Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives
Photo I.D. (file name): Barry 003

Description: Muir Lodge exterior. Photo dated 10/4—1917, and labeled "Muir Lodge 4th Anniversary Reunion" Note size of sequoia dedication tree American flag hanging in doorway.

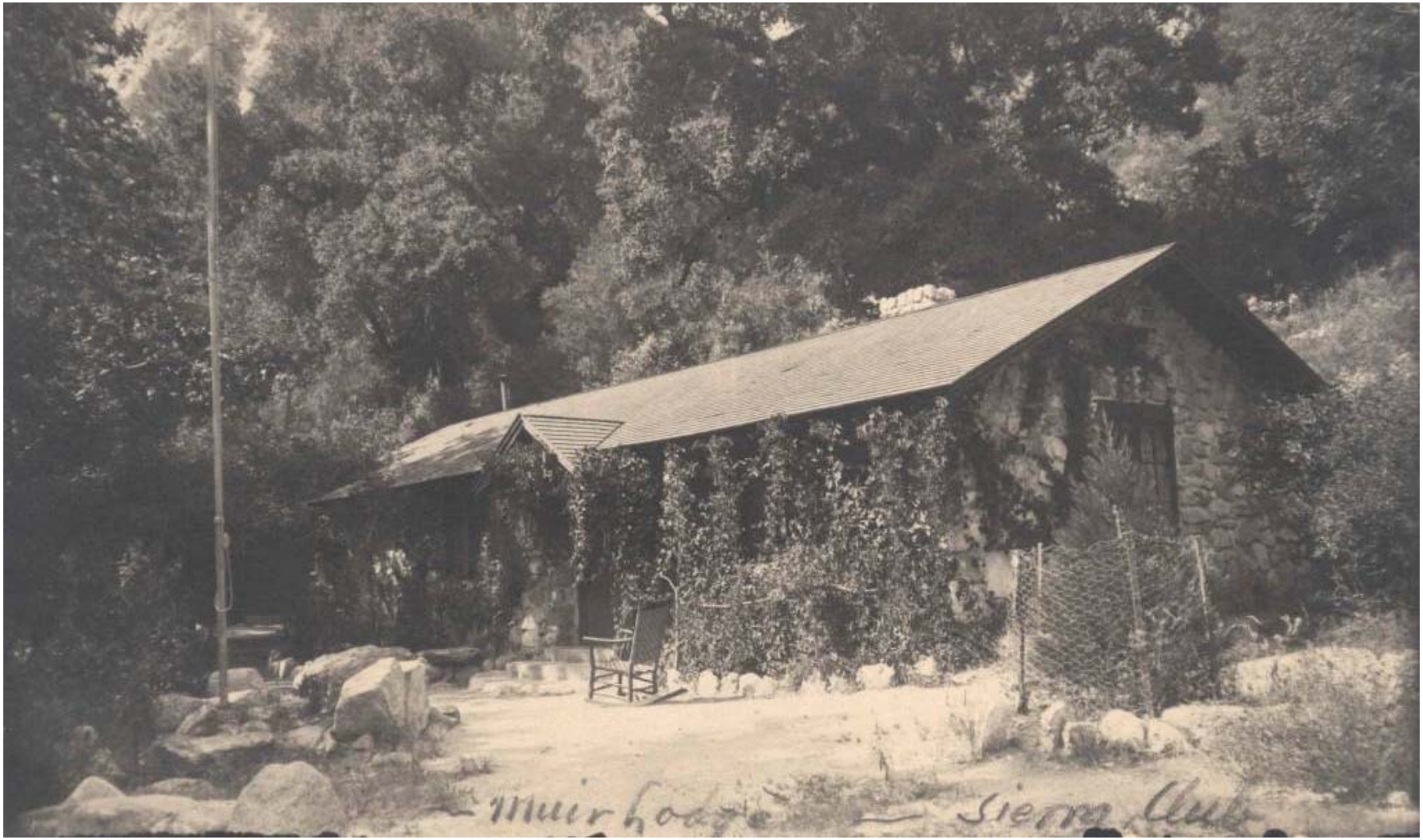
Photographer/Contributor: Hyram E. Bailey

Credit: Hyram E. Bailey Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Bailey 008



Description: Muir Lodge exterior. Group having picnic beside entry path. Note plaque to right of doorway. Photo undated.
Photographer: Unknown Contributor: Phil Bernays
Credit: Phil Bernays Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter
Photo ID (file name): Bernays 006



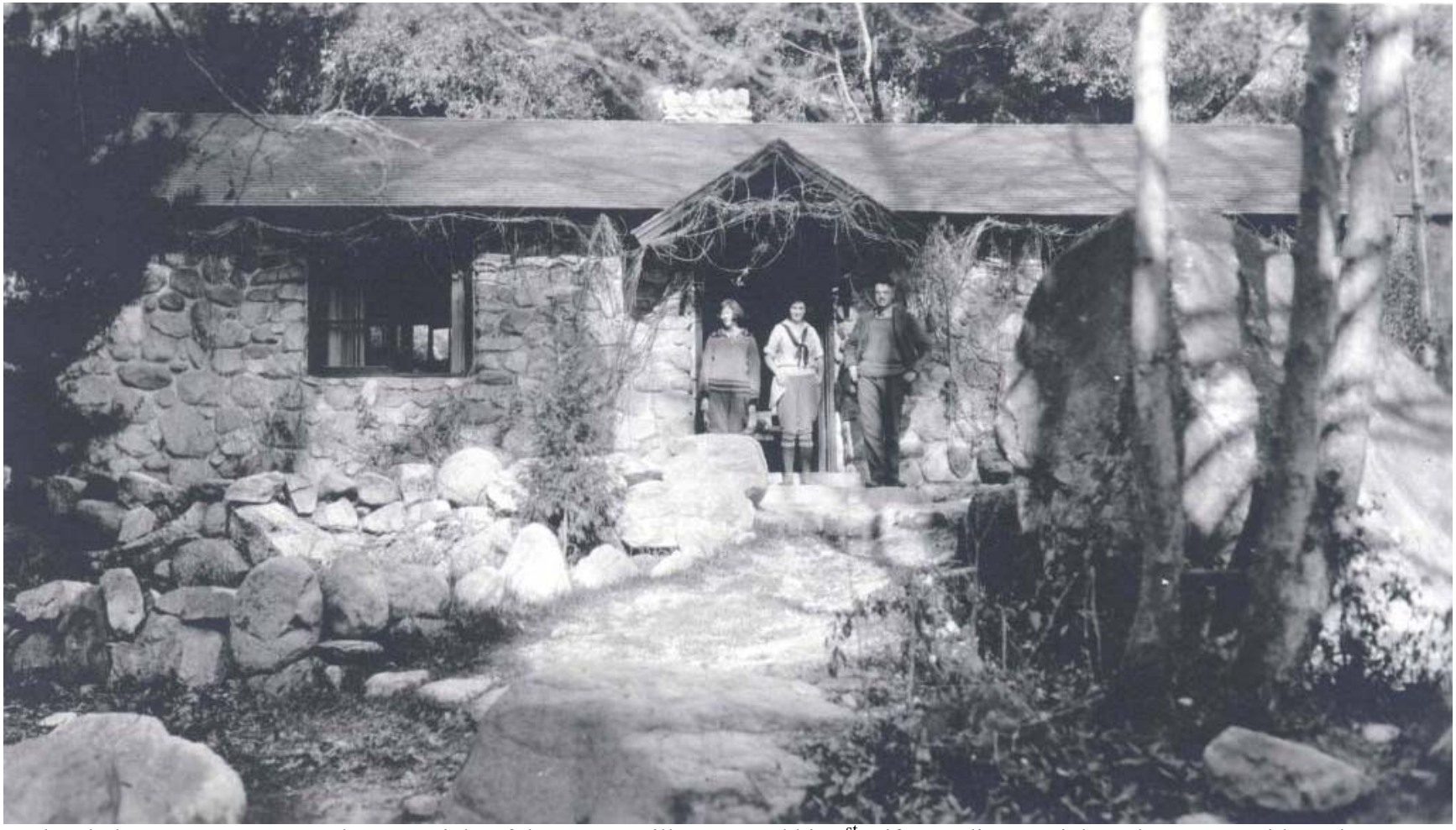
Back labeled “Taken July 1917”
Photographer/contributor unknown
Credit: Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives
Photo ID (file name): Anonymous 003

Undated photo c. 1920 judging by size of sequoia. Note plaque to right of doorway. This shows Bill Barry (far rt) and his wife (in middie-blouse, far left) lounging with friends in front of Muir Lodge. Photo goes with Lodge exterior 10.

Photographer/contributor: William C. Barry

Credit: William C. Barry Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo ID (file name): Barry 004



Undated photo c. 1920. Note plaque to right of doorway. Bill Barry and his 1st wife standing on right. Photo goes with Lodge exterior 09.

Photographer/Contributor: William C. Barry

Credit: William C. Barry Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo ID (file name): Barry 005

Group posing in front of Muir Lodge, Jan. 2, 1921. Sam Marks is the right-most of the 3 people sitting in front of the flag pole. Edgar Cook is standing behind the darkly attired man sitting in the chair. Elizabeth "Betty" Cook is standing just left of her husband.

Photographer/Contributor: Edgar Cook Contributor: Edgar Cook via Louise Werner

Credit: Edgar Cook Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo ID (file name): Cook 001

Description: A large social gathering at Muir Lodge, October 7, 1923. Only person identified is D.D. Chalmers, standing at far right (white shirt, hand on hip). This is #1 of a series of 4 photos of this same group of people.

Photographer: Unknown (probably Edgar Cook) Contributor: Unknown

Credit: Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Anonymous 004

Description: #2 of four photos of same group, October 7, 1923. D.D. Chalmers not seen in this variant. The new person is Edgar W.Cook, shown sitting on the ground next to a woman in the foreground. Note sequoia tree on far right that was planted at 1913 dedication ceremony.

Photographer: Edgar Cook Contributor: Edgar Cook via Louise Werner

Credit: Edgar Cook Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Cook 002

Description: #3 of four photos of same group, October 7, 1923. In this variant both D.D. Chalmers and Edgar Cook are seen. D.D. Chalmers is the man kneeling in foreground with blazing white shirt and bandana hat. Cook is standing third from the right.

Photographer: Unknown Contributor: Katherine Volk

Credit: Katherine Volk Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Volk 001

Description: #4 of four photos of same group, October 7, 1923. In this variant, no individuals have been identified to date.
Photographer: Unknown (probably Edgar Cook) Contributor: Unknown
Credit: Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives
Photo I.D. (file name): Anonymous 005

SPIRIT OF '37
GO 4TH AND GET A NEW MEMBER.
FEEL AT LIBERTY TO TAKE A GUEST ON A TRIP.
DECLARE YOUR INDEPENDENCE BY PAYING YOUR DUES.
JUNE IS THE MONTH OF HAPPY BRIDES AND MANY A SWEET GIRL GRADUATE
SO ITS UP TO ALL THE REST OF US OUR MEMBERSHIP LIST TO GREATLY INFLATE
ATTENTION! ALL MEMBERS BOTH OLD AND NEW
A JOLLY PARTY IS PLANNED FOR YOU
GET OUT YOUR UKE, BRIGHT COSTUME AND LEI
COME FEAST AND DANCE WITH SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS GAY
MUIR LODGE IS THE PLACE
22ND THE DAY
SO PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS WITHOUT DELAY
Sierra Club Dinner Bulletins, June-July 1937. Notice of South Seas Island Party to be held at Muir Lodge on 5/22/37.

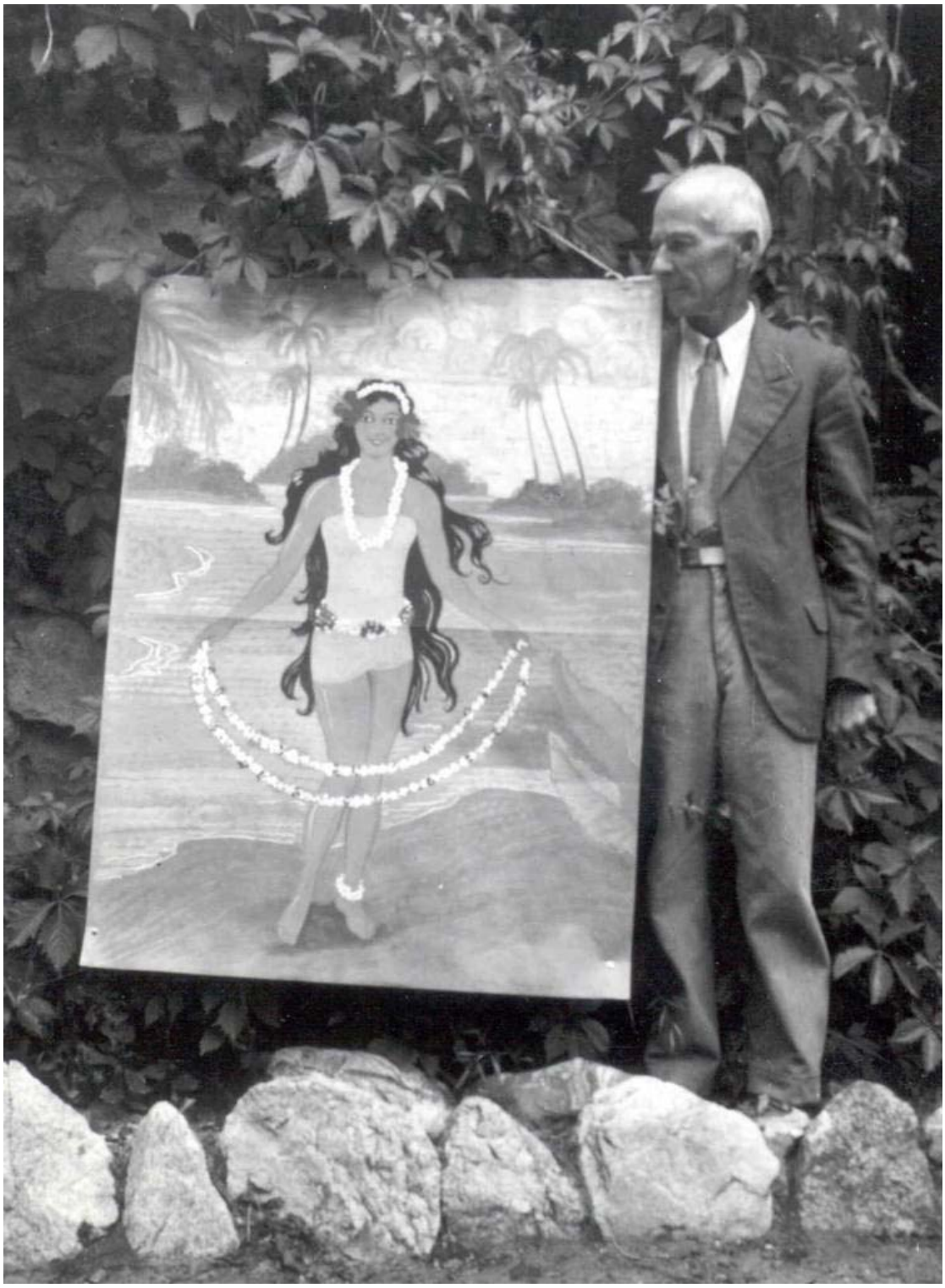
Photo by Edgar Cook Contributor: Edgar Cook via Louise Werner
Credit: Edgar Cook Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives
Photo I.D. (file name): Cook 003

South Seas Island Party at Muir Lodge, May 22, 1937. Seated figures, l to r: S. Jones (Stanley?), L. Warner, Norman McKee, and Howard Gates. Man standing at far left identified as Dick MacBird.

Photographer: Edgar Cook Contributor: Edgar Cook via Louise Werner

Credit: Edgar Cook Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo ID (file name): Cook 004



Edgar Cook posing beside a “Painting by Jean Anderson for South Sea Island Party at Muir Lodge, 5-22-1937.

Photographer: Edgar Cook Contributor: Edgar Cook via Louise Werner

Credit: Edgar Cook Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

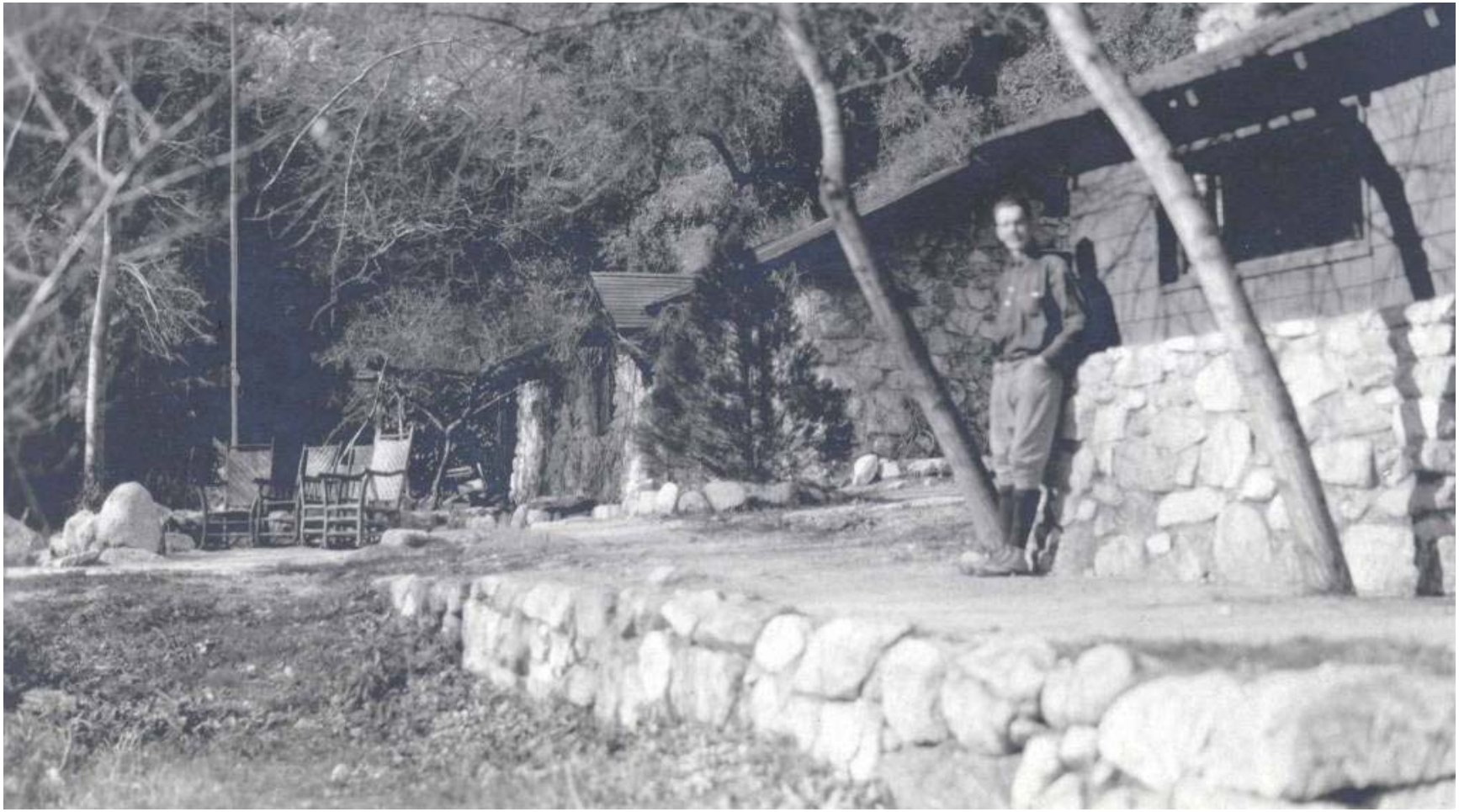
Photo ID (file name): Cook 005

Men's Annex, Muir Lodge. Back of photo labeled: "10/4/1917. Muir Lodge Annex. After Muir Lodge was destroyed by flood in 1938, this was bought by Caroline Tracy and others. I believe it is still standing." On a visit to the site in the 1980s by the Angeles Chapter History Committee, no trace of this building could be found.

Photographer/contributor: Hyram E. Bailey

Credit: Hyram E. Bailey Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Bailey 009



Description: Men's Annex in foreground, Muir Lodge in background. Photo labeled 1917. Note size of the sequoia tree between the two buildings.

Photographer/Contributor: William C. Barry

Credit: William C. Barry Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Barry 006

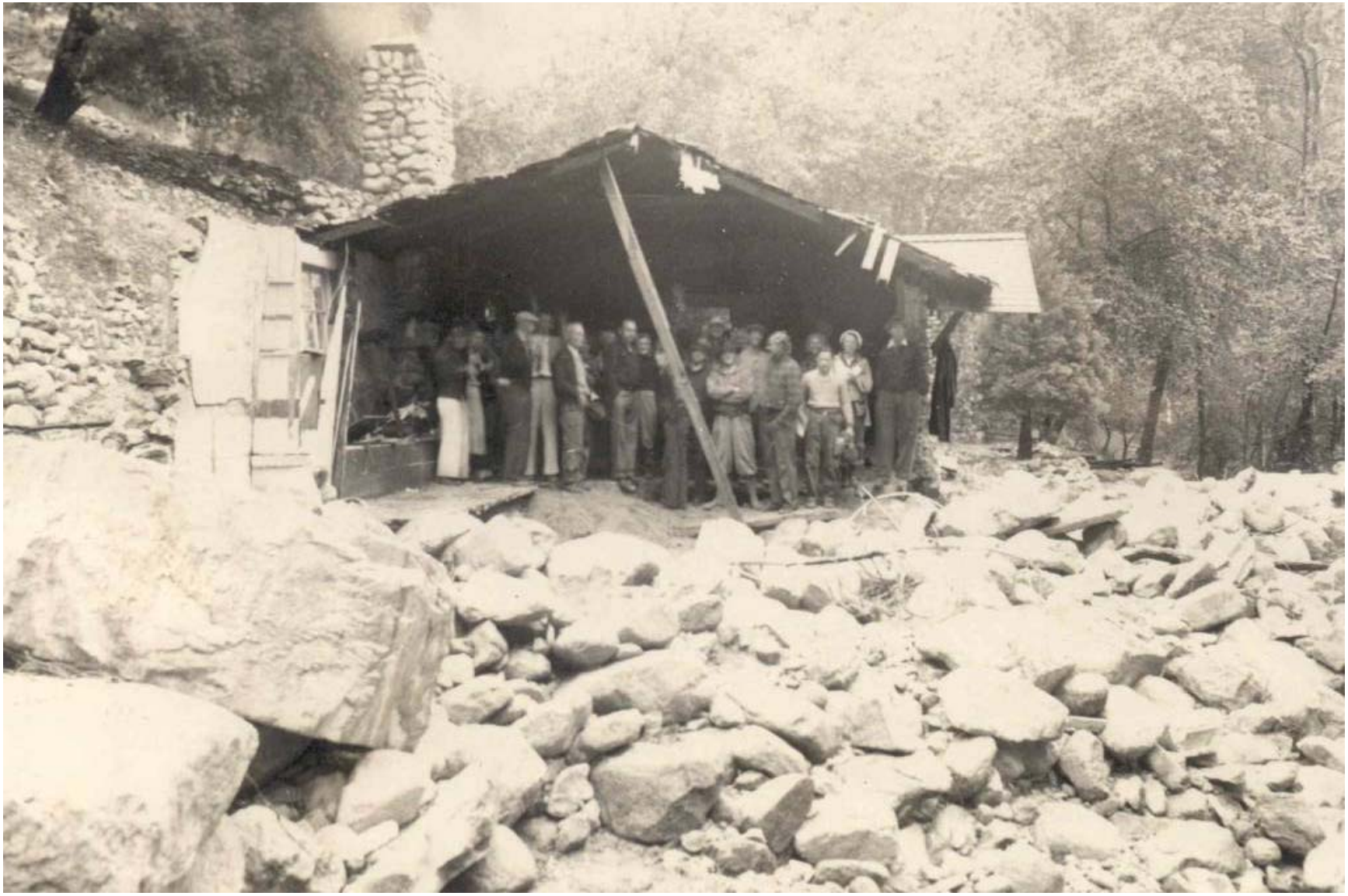
Description: Men's Annex, Muir Lodge. Back of photo dated August 10, 1914. Note tent set up in background.
Photographer: Unknown Contributor: Phil Bernays
Credit: Phil Bernays Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives
Photo I.D. (file name): Bernays 007

Description: Chapter founder Phil Bernays has every right to look glum upon this inspection trip to Muir Lodge on April 24, 1938. Note that the Muir Lodge plaque has already been removed from the wall far left, leaving a silouette. The woman is unidentified.

Photographer: Edgar Cook Contributor: William C. Barry

Credit: Photo by Edgar Cook, William C. Barry Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Barry 007

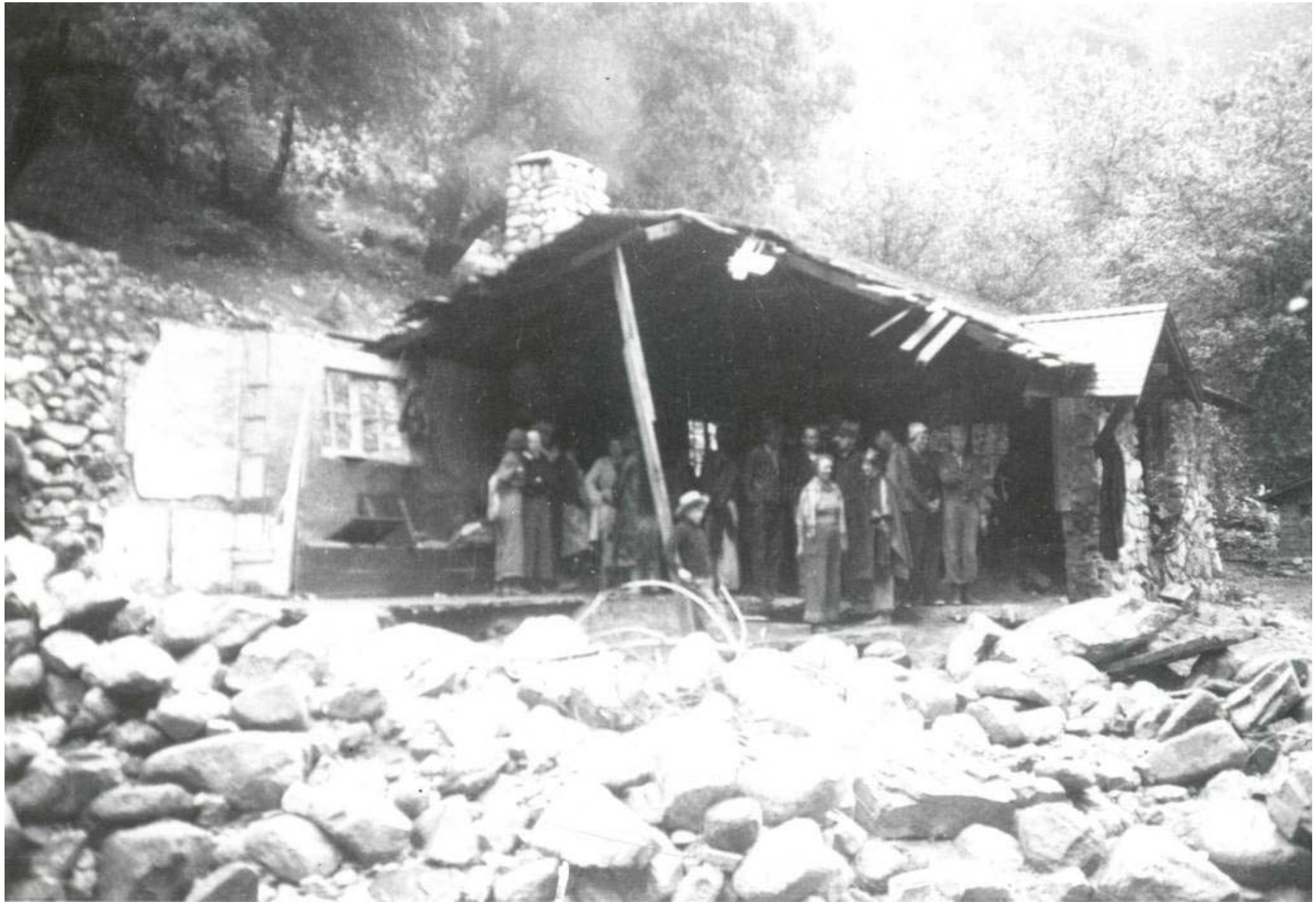


Description: One of the last conclaves of Sierrans gathers beneath the roof of Muir Lodge on April 24, 1938. Smoke issues from the chimney. The flood of the previous month took out the wall and eroded a portion of the floor as well.

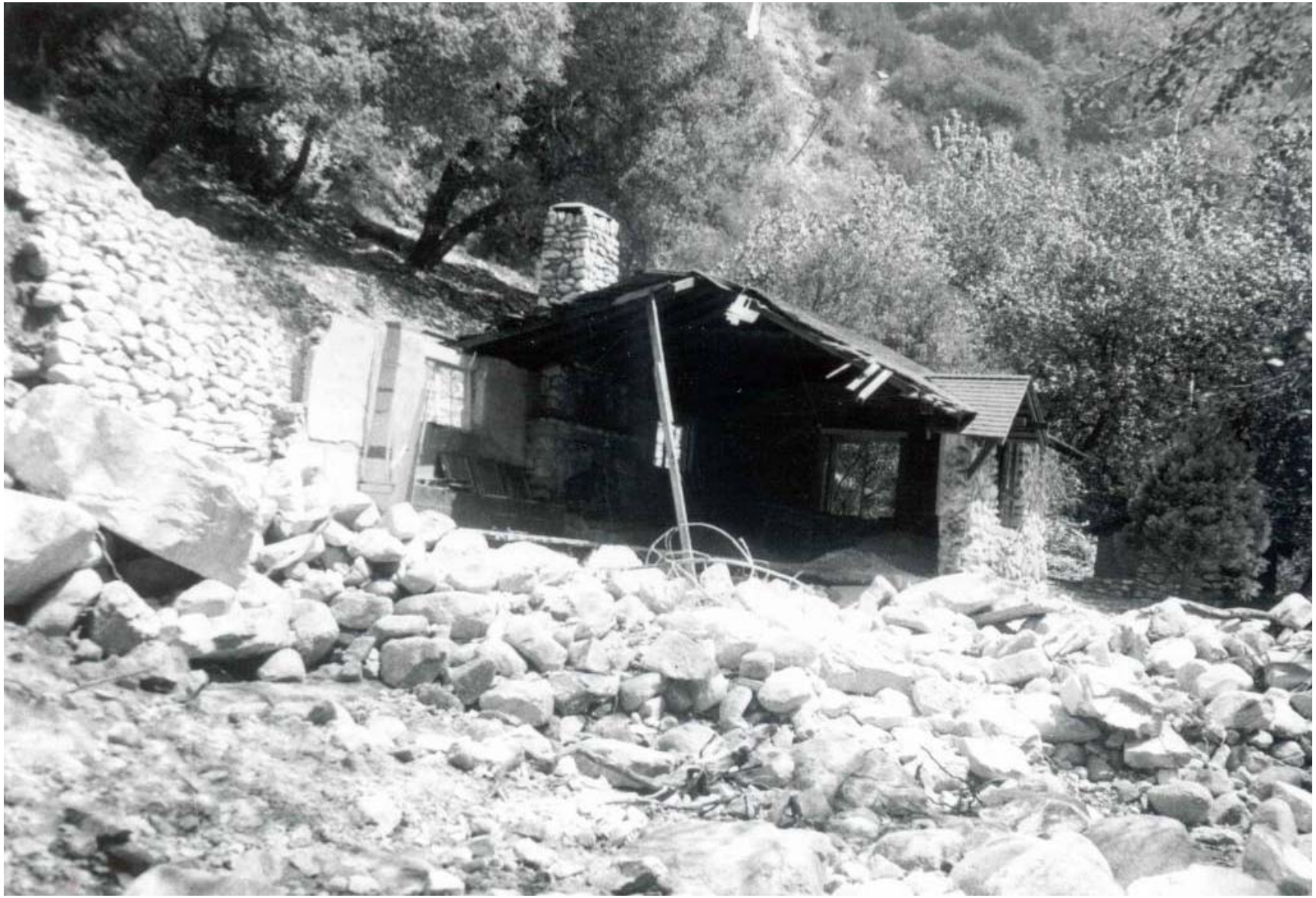
Photographer: Edgar Cook Contributor: William C. Barry

Credit: Photo by Edgar Cook, William C. Barry Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Barry 008



Description: A variant view from visit made by chapter members on April 24, 1938
Photographer: Unknown (possibly Edgar Cook or Hyram E. Bailey) Contributor: Hyram E. Bailey
Credit: Hyram E. Bailey Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives
Photo I.D. (file name): Bailey 010



Description: Flood damage shown on a sunny day, probably March or April, 1938
Photographer: Unknown (probably Hyram E. Bailey) Contributor: Hyram E. Bailey
Credit: Hyram E. Bailey Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives
Photo I.D. (file name): Bailey 011

Description: Cropped from previous photo and pushed to bring out view of interior.
Photographer: Unknown (probably Hyram E. Bailey) Contributor: Hyram E. Bailey
Credit: Hyram E. Bailey Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives
Photo I.D. (file name): Bailey 011a

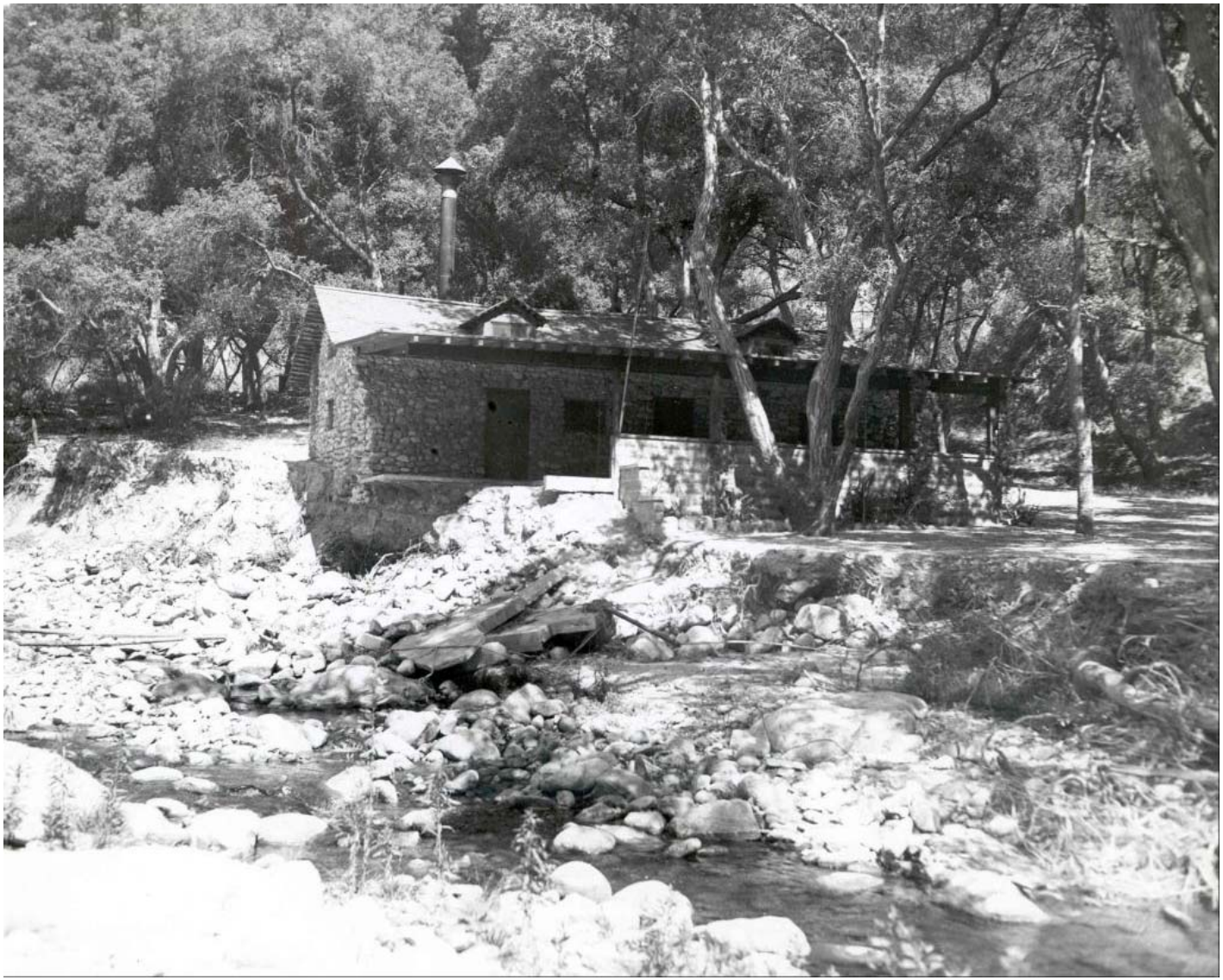
Description: Front view of Muir Lodge shortly after the great flood of March 1-2, 1938.
Photographer/Contributor: William C. Barry
Credit: William C. Barry Collection, Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives
Photo I.D. (file name): Barry 009

Description: Back of photo labeled “Club cabin after storm—Dec. 1931”. Certainly the date is wrong, since the flood occurred in March of 1938. Also, this does not look like the interior of Muir Lodge. The photo is included as being representative of typical flood damage that befell many cabins in the Front Range resulting from the heavy downpour of March 1-2, 1938.

Photographer: Unknown Contributor: Unknown

Credit: Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Anonymous 006



Description: Back labeled simply “Cabin”. This is not Muir Lodge, but probably a nearby cabin in Big Santa Anita Canyon that narrowly averted destruction in the flood of March 1-2, 1938.

Photographer: Unknown Contributor: Unknown

Credit: Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives

Photo I.D. (file name): Anonymous 007

Could this be the fabled Women's Annex of Muir Lodge. No labels on photo to identify the woman or the site.
Photographer: Unknown Contributor: Unknown
Credit: Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter Archives
Photo I.D. (file name): Anonymous 008